by excluding 85 items (including 15 sub-items which did not have independent serial numbers attached to them in the last reservation list) under Government notification S.O. 1169(E) dated 20th October, 2004 (copy enclosed at Annexure "II" [*See* Appendix 203 Annexure No. 8]).

Special category status to Orissa

*138. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that High Court of Orissa has directed the Centre to consider the request of the Government of Orissa for grant of special category status to the State;

(b) whether it is also a fact that many States such as Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and North-Eastern States have developd after they were granted special status; and

(c) if so, what is hindering the process for grant of this status to Orissa and the time-frame within which this would now be granted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The development of a State is dependent on mobilization of State's own resources, public and private investment, optimal utilization of inflows, efficient implementation of projects, etc. The North-Eastern States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura are among the 11 States which have been granted special category status.

(c) NDC has not approved grant of special category status to Orissa because it does not fulfil the criteria specified for the purpose of granting special category status which include; strategic location on the border with neighbouring countries, hilly terrain, inadequate economic and social infrastructure, predominantly large tribal population and limited weak resource base compared to development needs.